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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/527,885	02/24/2006	John Michael Richards	GFRED 3.3-004	5834

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EXAMINER

WALCZAK, DAVID J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3751	

DATE MAILED: 12/14/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/527,885	RICHARDS, JOHN MICHAEL	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	David J. Walczak	3751	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 October 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,5,8,9,11 and 14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

Claims 5 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. These claims are indefinite in that they depend from claims that have been previously canceled.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3, 5, 8, 9, 11 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Balasty in view of Kim and Rusk.

Balasty discloses a hand held writing instrument to be held in a triangular aperture between a user's fore finger, middle finger and thumb (see the Abstract) comprised of a grip 16 having the same triangular cross-section along the longitudinal axis thereof (see Figure 1 and column 2, lines 7-9). Although the three sides do not include concavities therein, attention is directed to the Kim reference, which discloses another writing instrument having a triangular cross-section wherein the sides thereof

are provided with concavities that extend along the entire length of the sides (see Figure 3) and along the longitudinal length of the writing instrument in order to provide seats for the fingers during use (see column 2, lines 34-41). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include such concavities along the sides of the Balasty device in order to provide seats thereon for the fingers of a user. Although the Kim reference does not disclose that one side thereof remains flat, attention is directed to the Rusk reference, which discloses another grip having a triangular cross-section for a writing instrument wherein two sides have concavities therein and one side remains "substantially flat" (see Figure 5) in order to enable the device to engage the fore and middle fingers, as well as the thumb in a comfortable fashion. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include concavities in only two of the sides of the Balasty device (while the third side remains flat) in order to enable the device to comfortably engage the fingers of a user.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 10/30/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The Applicant initially contends that the rejection described above is improper since there is no suggestion in either the Kim or Balasty references to provide a flat side on to the grip. However, as stated above, the Examiner is not relying on the Kim or Balasty references to teach a flat side. The Rusk reference is used to disclose that a

fingertip grip for a writing instrument can be equipped with both concave and flat surfaces for comfortably engaging the fingers of user.

The Applicant then contends that the Rusk reference is not applicable in that it does not include flat or concave “sides” that extend the length of the grip. However, the Examiner is not relying on the Rusk reference to disclose a grip that has a constant cross-section. Such a feature is already present on the Balasty device. The Rusk reference is merely being relied on to teach that a combination of concave and flat surfaces can be used on a writing grip for enabling comfortable holding of the grip.

The Applicant is arguing that there is no motivation to combine the various features of the Kim, Balasty and Rusk devices to arrive at the claimed structure. In response to this argument, the Examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, one of ordinary skill/knowledge in the art at the time the invention was made, after reviewing the three references, would readily recognize that a grip can be formed with a constant three-sided cross-section (in order, for example, to simplify the manufacturing of the grip) and with concave surfaces for the thumb and index fingers combined with a flat surface for the middle finger in order to enable a comfortable grip.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

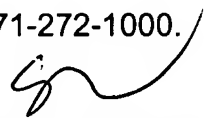
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David J. Walczak whose telephone number is 571-272-4895. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs, 6:30- 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Huson Gregory can be reached on 571-272-4887. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3751

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



David J. Walczak
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3751

DJW
12/11/06